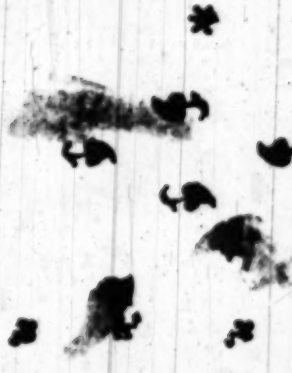
¶ A dyalogue bitwene the plaintife and the Defendaunt. Compyled by Wyllyam Calueley/ whyles he was prisoner in the towre of London.



¶ To the kynges highnesse.

O Excellent prince of my lyfe chefe patron
Medicyn to sycke mē in their grete distresse
To all nedy: both shelde and protection
Refuge to wretches their dommage to redresse
Wen that ar halfe deed / restoring to quickenesse
Sith your grace of god was chosē to be so good
O excellent prince forgyue my offencesse
In thonour of god that bought you wt his blode

¶ Blacke is my wede / of cōplaynte & mournig
As a man cast from all felycite
Lyke one of a funerall / bedewed with wepynge
Clad in the mantell of frowarde aduersyte
Trymblyng and quakinge / of my lyfe no surete
But if I drinke of your most mercyfull flode
Than shall I neuer offende / by your souerayntе
But saue that which god bought wt his pciouse (blode

¶ O myrrour of lyght / suffre nat to perysshe
Thy poore subiecte: but to his prayer enclyne
Whiche herafter thy lawes shall cherysshe
And kepe them as most holly and diuyne
Sith your grace hath ben treacle & chefe medicyn
To other offendours which in myschef stode
Pardon me Salomō / I wyll obey thy doctryne
And saue ỹ which god bouzt wt his pcious blod

¶ And for my parte/ of one hert abidyng
Voyde of chaunge/ and all mutabilyte
I do present this boke/ with hande shakyng
Of hole affection/ knelyng on my kne
Desyring the lorde/ whiche is persons thre
By whose magnifycence we receyue all fode
That by your grace I may haue lybertye
And saue ỹ which god bouzt with his p̄ci. blode

¶ For all my purpose combyned in to one
Of whiche this boke shall make mencioun
Is to voyde yll wede/and to take the good corne
As reason hath taught me by discretioune
Puttyng no trust in the whele of fortune
But in this dialogue cōprehend that ylons good
By grace and vertu may here contune
And saue ỹ which god bought w̄ his p̄cio9 blode

¶ Go forth lytle boke for fere tremblynge
Pray the prince to haue on the pytie
Voyde of all picture/ or of any connynge
To compyle any curyouse ditie
Caulynge thy prince to take on the mercy
Pray god graunt his grace that died on the rode
To preserue his hye noblenes and magnanimite
And to be partaker of Christes precious blode.

¶ Thus endeth the supplication/ and here
folowyth the Dialogue betwene the
Playntyf and defendant.

The Playntyf

AS I sat mulyng / callyng to remẽbrace
And consydered in myn owne fantasy
The vnsure trust of worldly vayaunce
Of men and women/ the chaunge and the folly
Thought in my mynde to compyle some ditye
Lyke one troubled in herte with heuynesse
No socour fyndinge / me for to redresse.

¶ Blamyng fortune/ why she stode nat certayne
But with her double whele brought mẽ in doute
Causynge me for to suffre moche payne
Reportynge howe she had cast me out
From her fauour/ as she tourned about
Takig a wrõge turne/ where I thought me sure
By her double meanes / and my harde auenture

¶ Sayenge lady: thou settest by me no pryce
For by thy froward and furiouse vyolence
Thou hast tourned thy whele/ & visage of malyce
Bringynge me clene from all credence
Hauynge nothynge to make resystence
Thus by the fortune/ and thy mutabilyte
Sole adiecte/ and cast in to pouerte

¶ What haue I offended thou art so cõtrarious
Whiche hath caused me in mischefe to fall
Thus to be tourmented in thy syege perilouse
My swete sugre is tempered with gall
Wherfore to the/ I reply my hurtes all
But this as I wrote/ I herde a voyce crye
Peace I saye/ thou begynnest for to lye

¶ Deffendãt A. iii. Sothly

Sothly I parceyue well thy condicion
Thou dost as vnthryft/ almost euery chõe
Wyll them excuse/ without exception
And blame foztune/ as their chef fone
Sayenge/it is in her power alone
The to rule/ as a lady of destony
Whiche is a secte of playne Idolatry

¶ Nature hath taught the/ ỹ wrõge is to excuse
Under a curtayne/your falshed to hyde
Lytell good corne amonges your chaf to ble
On your fautes you lyst nat to abyde
The gaule touched/ all that you set a syde
Sowynge roses fresshe/ the nettles you let passe
Under foztune to couer your trespasse

¶ And if you maye tell your owne tale
Howe that all came by foztunes whele
Lockinge your falsnesse faste in a male
Shewynge of your vyces but a small percele
As brickle glasse/ sheweth brighter than stele
Though vpon foztune you wolde set your ptence
Yc is a fole that gyueth to you credence

¶ Playntyffe

Thus was I pensyf/ the water frõ my eye
Foz fere spronge forth/ & made pale my vi
Soze a basshed I beynge solytary (sage
Shulde here a voyce/ and se no ymage
It parted atwayne/ both colour and courage
But by the voyce/ I thought by nature
That it shulde be some moztall creature.

I

¶ I sat full styll and marked what it sayde
Ferefull of chere/ sad in countenaunce
Thynkinge to answere / sone at abrayde
And to that sayenge gaue dilygent attendaunce
Thus than I sayde with good remembraunce
If thou wylt argue/ agaynst fortunes strength
It wyl be sene vpon the at the length

¶ Fortune hath lyfte many men alofte
To hye astate and worldely dignyte
Another sorte she hath gryped full vnsofte
And cast them downe in to great aduersyte
By other proued/ nowe verifyed in me
Which is cast downe into stronge prison
There to abyde of the lawe correction

¶ Deffendant

O God reason that/ for lawes first was foũde
In sondry wyse and busy occupacyon
Vertu to cherisshe/ vyces to confounde
Men chosen/ of power and good entencyon
Which of offendours shulde se done executyon
So that the vertuouse shulde be reserued
And haue promotyons/ such as they deserued.

¶ Dedalus was the fyrst that prisons wrought
Full of ingyns/ called Laborinthus
All offenders thyder to be brought
A croked place/ to gete forthe daungerous
For suche as to good lawes were contrarious
And Tarquinus/ as I written fynde
Founde fyrst shaccles men for to bynde

These

¶ These were ordayned vertue to preferre
And to maintayne trewe labour and busynesse
Besydes that/ to punisshe such as shulde erre
Whiche haue no ioye but vpon Idlenesse
And for other in their labours retcheles
Purposynge to punisshe Sardanapall
Whiche of mischeues/ may be reconed principall

¶ Playntyffe

Of Sardanapall I neuer had acqueyntesse
I euer loued to a voide his company
Knowynge him to be vicyouse Idlenesse
Which is distruction/ to all maner of degre
Therfore thou offendest to atwyte me
With him whom I neuer yet loued
Nor yet them/ which him in housholde cherisshed

¶ And where thou sayst that prisõs ordeyned be
Offendours to chastyce / to mayntayne the right
For the welfare of euery compynalty
To preferre vertue to his clere lyght
That to denaye it were nat in my myght
But one thynge wolde I demaunde of the
Whether suche robbe nat a hole compynalty

¶ That hath shepe in pastures goynge
Whiche grouñde before this hath bẽ put to tyllage
Hauyng thousãdes/ his poore neybour lackinge
Ye and his shepherdes alone in a byllage
Thus getteth his goodes/ by extortion & pyllage
If a man parte of his goodes withdrawe
Shal he make answere therfore by goddes lawe

¶ Deffendant Naye

Nay nat so I say; it is all otherwyse
I may nat suffre you to go there amonge
Lest that you wolde perilouse thynges deuyse
Under a colour / to occupie you with wrong
What shuld I lenger drawe the mater a long
Of goddes lawes thou art nat executor
Nor of thy souerayns / no good reformator.

¶ God gaue a lawe / and with this a precept
That no man shuld his neyghbours good desyre
Thou hast nat the offyce them to correcte
But with god thou connest in great Ire.
But what thou meanest / now sone I can cõspire
Thou thynkest to make a cloke for the rayne.
It wyll nat be / for it is all in vayne.

¶ Of suche conspiracy began fyrst robbers
Theues by hye wayes / extorcion with violence
Murder / slanghter / and couert brybers
Discension / grudgyng / and disobedience
Now of thy tale to touche thy pretence
It is nat fortune that causeth their yll chaunce
But them / selues for lacke of good gouernaunce.

¶ Playntyffe

¶ Nat fortune? yes / and that shall well be sene
For by her euer / men do possesse treasures
Fallen hath to ruyn both kinge and quene
And raysed agayne by her onely socours
Exalted she hath / many great cõquerours
And to suche as she wolde nat se
Hath cast them downe in great aduersyte

¶ Loke who she enbraseth & holdeth i her chaine
Worldely people/ and their goodes transitory
And ryche marchauntes vnder her demeane
To knighthod she gyueth conquest and victory
She gyueth to other worldely prosperyte
Loke who her fauour hath recured
In this lyfe/ of welth they be assured.

¶ These bysshops which be of lowe birth borne
And spirituall prelates in Rome towne
She hath them exalted other before
But nowe a lyttell she hath brought them downe
Thus whā she lyst her self to frowne
She spareth nether manhod nor kynred
For of all persons she wyll be dred

¶ Defendāt

SUche be wretches/ and to god vnkynde
That putteth them vnder her subiection
From goddes preceptes makyng thē selfe blynde
Submittynge thē to fortune/ aboue good reason
And as touching ỹ prelates ỹ ar brought downe
Fortune pulled them nat from that place
It is the scorge of god/ for ỹ they lacked grace.

¶ The fall of one/ shulde be a clere lyght
To teache the other what they shulde eschewe
It is god that punissheth with his myght
And tryeth out the false from the trewe
Who that is here punissched for his offence dewe
Happy may be/ if he say with good entent
Welcom from god/ the scourge of chastysement

¶ O what vnkinde people shuld them betake
And put their wylles vnto fortunes cure
Of god aboue the power to forsake
And with fortune all thinge wyll assure
Thinking alwaye by her to endure
Lyke as she were of destyny a goddesse
That could bringe mã to welth or wretchednesse

¶ Playntyffe

Thy wordes stronge I may nat wel debar
Thy name I desyre before that I do spek
I thinke thou hast ben some man of war
Thy wynde causeth my herte to breke
Out from my eyen the water doth out leke
Thinkige I haue begonne/agaynst one to reply
Which by his strength wyll haue the mastry

¶ For lyke as rofide droppes of the south rayne
Which that discende/ and fall from a lofte
On stones harde/ at the eye as it is sayne
Peerseth the hardnesse/ with their fallynge ofte
Albeit in toucheng/ the water is but softe
The perfyng causeth by force no puissaunce
But by fallyng / the longe contynuaunce

¶ So semblaby of right I dare reherce
Thy wordes marked with full and good entent
A hole in to my herte doth perce
For I fere lest that I might be shent
And by my excusyng ronne in a contempt
More worthy for that to be punissheable
Than by the faute I shulde haue ben culpable

¶ Deffendant

In warres trewly there haue I ben ofte
But my nature is alwaye to make peale
Without me moſt thinges do proue nought
Howe ſo euer it be / by hardneſſe or eaſe
Loke who that loueth me nat to pleaſe
Here he can nat longe be in tune
Although he thinke to mary with fortune

¶ I haue me ſo bled / that thorow my noblenes
Clerkes in lerninge / which clerely can conceme
Doughter of god / lady / and princes
Reaſon they call me / good folke to gouerne
Atwene good and euyll / iuſtly to decerne
I haue departed playnly to conclude
The lyfe of man / from the lyfe of beeſtes rude.

¶ With me I conſerue / both vertue and meſure
Conſyderinge thinges / what ſhalbe fall
Taking no enterprice: but w^t me diſcrecion ſure
And vpon prudence / founde my worke all
Than to counſell / Attemperaunce I do call
Warely prouydinge / in my ſelfe within
The ende of thinges / before that I begynne.

¶ Playntyfe.

Helas / helas / to write in wordes fewe
Lenger to lyue / I haue no fantaſye
For where ſhulde I my face out ſhewe
Syth agaynſte reaſon / I haue helde champerty
Nowe dare I appere in to no company
For to my body / deth I haue prouyded
Leuig reaſō & vertu / which ſhuld me haue gided

Nowe

¶ Nowe this mater troubleth my memory
Better to dye than to lyue in shame
For my offences thus stande I in ieoperdy
Fro my mortall body/ gone is my name
Youth and fraynesse was moche to blame
Wherfore better it were from this lyfe deceuer
Than with slaunderouse fame/ for to lyue euer.

¶ Some tonges there be venemouse of nature
Whan they perceyue a man from state meued
With their wylles do their busy cure
By yll reporte/ to make men more greued
There is no poyson so well expert and preued
Therfore now hert / why brekest thou nat asõder
Of this worlde to rydde the from this wonder.

¶ Delfendant

Nat so / for I can breke a castell down
And bylde it after more fresshe to ỹ syght
Exyle a man from dyuers region
And him reuoke whan I lyst by tyght
Thus may I do by my power and myght
So that thou wylt obeye to me reason
I shall the teche / this trouble to ouercom

¶ A theke may robbe a man of his richesse
And by some meane make restitution
Another may by myght oppresse
The pore man from his possession
Yet after to him make satisfaction
Be it with lyfe or elles with deth.
Cor contritum et humiliatum deus non dispiciet.

¶ The lorde for a tyme may the chastyce
And of offenders sende the to the place
Whan he and I together do deuyse
That with repentance/ thou art fall in grace
Than sone after we shall deuyse a place
Takinge the vnto our great mercy
Thinkyng by correction/ gone is thy folly.

¶ Playntyffe

If thou canst this matter thus recure
I shall the promyse all the dayes of my lyfe
To be vnder thy protection and lure
Obedyent at all/ as a louynge wyfe
Euer with vyce to holde warre and stryfe
For bi him I am brought in wretchednes & nede
Forsaken of good men/ frendshyp/ and kinrede

¶ Take here my faith in pledge or hostage
To fulfyll it with sure condicyon
Credence you must my speche or langage
For what helpeth an oblygacion
To him/ which hath nought in possessyon
If I shulde breke/ spare nat to ordayne
For my wretchednes most cruell payne.

¶ And I shall first for my offences all
Be sory in hert/ wilynge to amende
And after that to write my generall
In example to other which shulde entende
Herafter/ in sache a caule to offende
If my soucrayne sende nat Atropose with hast
Me to arest with his dedly mase.

¶ Defendãt For

Heare nat that / for the stronge lyoun
To prostrate peple / of kynde is mercyable
Unto suche as fall before him downe
No beest in mercy to him comperable
His royall puysance can nat be vengeable
Who falleth down / and for mercy doth call
He doth defende them from wolues & tygers all

¶ This royall lyon / of valyaunt gentry
Amonge other beestes of force incomperable
Preuyth nat his power nor regally
Agaynst beestes which be nat defensable
Nor agaynst wretches in cause semblable
But for their offences taketh mercye in morgage
Forgiuynge offences / leauyng their outrage

¶ Therfore to wyte / loke thou procede
And condempne agaynste me thy fyrst argument
Excepte that grace abouc fortune excede
And with him vertue / both of one assent
Nothinge may last / nor be permanent
But at the ende such guerdon they shall haue
As the iust matter of right shulde therfore craue

¶ Playntyfe

NOwe first Helas / who shalbe my muse
Or to whom shall I for helpe call
Caliope / my callynge wyll refuse
And on Pernaso hir worthy systers all
They wyll their spices tempre with no gall
For their swetnesse / and lusty freshe syngynge
Full farre discordeth from matter complaynyng

Thus

¶ Thus I nowe beginning / derked wᵗ ignoraũce
My wyt is dull this thynge to discerne
Quenched at the torches of parceueraunce
Clene extincte the lyght of my lanterne
Lackynge lernynge my style to gouerne
Drede and vnconnynge maketh a batayle
With dulnesse of wyt / to hynder my trauayle

¶ Suppoꝛte haue I none my dulnes to guyde
Douerte hath written my name in his boke
Dispere standeth also by my syde
Which paleth my chere / and astonyeth my loke
Thus I hotte / dꝛye / and wery / fyndeth no bote
Howe I shulde to reason my promyse fulfyll
Standyng wauerynge betwene good and yll

¶ Deffendant

Dispayꝛe / I say nay / that is contrary
It is Idlenesse here in thys present lyfe
Which hath dꝛawen many from their lybꝛary
And wyll nat suffre them to be contemplatyfe
Foꝛ her condicion is to holde stryfe
With euery vertuouse occupacion
Which men shulde voyde / by wysedom & reason

¶ Remembꝛe thy busynesse / loke thou take hede
Pꝛocede with thy woꝛke thou hast take in hande
Grace shall crosse thy sayle with good spede
And kepe thy shyp from neglygẽces sande
Good counsell shall bꝛynge thy shyp to lande
And hope shall bꝛynge vnto the socour
Trustyng some man shall acquyte thy labour

¶ I meane as thus/ the shyppe of thy traueyle
Which hath passed the great dangerouse seuen
Cast nat anker/ tyll thou hast good riuale
Let no tempest/ thunder/ nor leuyn
Nor no wyndes of the cloudy heuyn
Cause idlenesse to lay thy pyllow/ euē nor morow
Voyde her/ and let her go with sorowe

¶ Playntyfe (drede

This writyng my letter/ I wrapped all in
In my right hāde/ my penne begineth to
And for fere/ my hert is lyke to blede (quake
Yet must I forth/ and this vndertake
For to Reason promyse dyd I make
The teres distillynge fro myne eyes brinke
At this begynnyng I tempre with my inke

But hope and trust putteth away dispayre
In to my mynde/ of newe I gan redresse
To make the wether bright and fayre
Reasons promyse/ with his boūtuous largenesse
Brought in to my herte so moche gladnesse
That without any maner of delay
As is this tenour/ this fyrst I gan say.

¶ Reatures all/ in your fyrst prouydence
Be right well ware / any thyng to attame
Whiche vnto god shulde be offence
For if ye do the ende of it is shame
And in this worlde appalled is your name
But you repente/ god of his iustyce
your vicious lyueng vnwarely wyll chastyce

Exeepte

¶ Except you folowe vertue with dilygence
Forsaking vice/ the mother of Idlenesse
your ende you may se/ by other experience
Which is nought/ but misery and wretchednesse
Forsake wronge/ and folowe rightwisenesse
Or elles of one thinge be you sure
God wyll nat suffre you longe to endure

¶ Unto false prophetes gyue no credence
Folowyng mans lerninge / and their tradicion
But to goddes preceptes with all reuerence
Put thy mynde and hole entencyon
Forsake nat god for all their punission
For they be wolues wrapped in a lammes skinne
Honey without/ and poyson within

¶ The wyly wolues that casteth to deuour
The sely lammes/ which can no defence
Nor no helpe/ them for to socoure
So feble they ar to make resystence
Whiche denyeth trewth/by false apparence
What wonder is it) the fraude nat conceyued
Though such lammes vnwarely be deceyued

¶ Lāmes they ar i shewyng / shadowed wt me-
Cruell as tygers/who doth thē offence (kenesse
Of great holynes pretendynge a lykenesse
But wo (alas) what harme doth apparence
What domage doth countrefayt innocence
Under a mantell of false simplicite
Very hipocrites full of crueltie

Remēbre

¶ Remebre Rome/cal now vnto thy mynde
The dayes ar passed of thy felicyte
Thy great cõquestes are lefte behynde
To lyght is come all thy iniquite
Thy decrees sent forth in to euery countre
Suche as agreed nat with Christes scripture
Ar clene extyncke/ no lenger may endure

¶ Frõ Theest to ỹ weest thy lybertȳ dyd attayn
Aboue all power most excellent and royall
But now truth brought out / so euidẽt and plain
Hath hyndred fore thy seate imperiall
In peoples hertes to remayne perpetuall
Your hye prydes are now defaced
Your bulles and pardons / almoste out raced.

¶ Kynges and princes were to the tryputary
Of all welth/so gret was your dode
Untyll from god/so fare you dyd vary
That all creatures/ knowynge yl from good
Perceyued you bare two faces in one hood
Than by good reason sone they prouyded
From your burdens/ for to be deuyded

¶ O Rome/ Rome/ loke all thy olde abusion
Of thy Ceremonies/ and false disgysynge
Laye them asyde/ and now in conclusion
Cry god mercy/thy trespas repentyng
Trust he wyll nat at length refuse thy askyng
The to receyue to worke in his vyne
And to haue asmoche/as he that cam at prime.

Unto

Unto the kyng with kaythfull obeysaunce
Towardes his grace/shewe thy humilyte
Agaynst him nor his/ holde no baryaunce
But fyght for him/ in euery countre
Desyre to se him in ioye and felycite
Kepe his preceptes/ as thy lorde and soueraygne
Euer as pleasure/ thinking them no payne.

¶ Thy obeysaunce playnly/ at a worde
By god thou arte cõmaũded to owe in soueregne
Unto thy kynge/ thy gouernour & thy lorde
In payne of dedly synne / so he cõmaundeth the
Both to him/ and to such as he agre
Of his people to take the gouernaunce
Them to folowe with their good ordinaunce

¶ Consyder thou/ it is a hertely reioysinge
To serue a prince/ that well doth auertyse
Of his seruantes the faithfull iust meanynge
And wyll consyder to gwerdon their seruyce
Which at a nede wyll them nat despyce
But frõ all danger that shulde thẽ noye or greue
Be euer redy to helpe them and releue.

¶ As in this lande/ I dare affirme a thyng
Henry the eight/ full myghty of puisaunce
Of England and Fraunce/ our most noble king
Defensor of the faith/ hauig Irelãde in gouernãce
To al his subiectes/ greatest ioye & pleasãce
By whose noble polycie / and also discecyon
Conserued is this most noble regyon

During

¶ Duringe his tyme/ longe by his prudence
Peace and quiete/ he sustayneth by right
That natwithstanding his noble prouydence
In this worlde lyueth nat a better knight
Eyed as Argus/ with reason and forcsyth
And in good lerninge/ I dare of him tell
Of his predecessours/ the most he doth excell

¶ This with his prudence/ and his manhede
Trewth he sustayneth/ fauour settyng a syde
To Christes scripture/ a mayntenour with dede
That in this lande/ false pphetes dare nat byde
A very suppozter/ bpholder/ and also guyde
Of Christes churche defence/ a noble champion
To chastyce all tho/ that be Christes foue

¶ Obseruinge alwayes/ the testament of Jesu
Studyenge euer to haue the trewe intellygence
Gyuenge his subiectes the lyght of bertue
Ipocrisy excluding vnder false apparence
Thus of the trewth he bath experience
Knowing him selfe/ in many sondry wyse
Where they trespace/ their errour to chastyce

¶ Reuolue how our souerayne/ a mirrour of liȝt
Trãscendeth all other/ by bertuouse exellence
Eschewinge all bisyons/ seking the right
By his noble descrecyon/ a naturall prouydence
Temperinge his nature/ by mercy a clemence
Keppnge dangers from his subiectȝ in all thige
As appertayneth to a most noble kynge

¶ Thinges

¶ Thiges longe passed / he kepeth in remẽbrãce
Conseruing all thinges / with honour in presence
For thinges to come / maketh good ordinaunce
Folowing the traces of vertuouse contynence
Agaynst rayned myracles makynge resistence
By the great vertue / and magnanimyte
Whiche is apropred to his roiall maiestie

¶ Also his manhode / sheweth him lyke a kyng
From other princes by maner of apparence
Of goodly stature as euer was raignyng
Spoken longe and farre of men / frõ his presẽce
I knowe nat whether with dew reuerence
The regiõ shuld be happyer / ẏ hath such a gouer
Or els by god chosyn / his grace to ẏ honor(nour

¶ About him he hath for our great auayle
Dayly and hourly in his presence
Prudent and valyaunt to be of his counsayle
Suche of this worlde as hath most experience
Betwene good and euyll knowyng ẏ difference
Tha giuyng Res publica / to vs his subiectes
With reuerent fere & loue / obeyng his preceptes.

¶ What hert so indurate / shuld nat loue such one
Which so nobly conserueth his royall dygnite
Although he were made of the Adamant stone
Yet wolde it gyue / for he with prosperyte
Is nat gladder / nor for no aduersyte
Chaungeth no countinance / his courage to renew
Both to god and man / yeldyng that is dewe.

Thus

¶ Thus a man that perfyte is and ſtable
As ſcripture with good reaſon doth preue
Nothing there is ſo fayre nor agreable
Than fynally this vicious lyfe to leaue
On very god rightfully to be leue
Him to loue and worſhip aboue all thynge
And next to him/ thy moſt redouted kynge

¶ Olde examples of men that hath fall
If they with grace brought them to myndc
Myght be a myrrour to creatures all
Howe they in vertue ſhal remedies fynde
To eſchew vyces/ of ſuche as were made blynde
Fro ſodayn fallynge them ſelues to preſerue
Longe to contune / and thanke of god deſerue

¶ But ſuche as lyſt nat corrected to be
By example of other for vicyouſe gouernaunce
Other of him ſhall the correction ſe
Bicauſe they ſhulde mende their miſgouernance
Say nat that it is by fortunes variaunce
Colourynge ſuch gyltes/ which they do vſe
Their demerytes by collour ſo to excuſe

¶ Who folowth vertu longeſt ſhall perceuer
Be it in riches or elles in pouerty
Lyght of trouth / his clerenes keppynge euer
Againſt the aſſautes of longe proſperite
Make youth and vertu togyther to agre
For whan a man from vertu doth declyne
Harde it is/ if he make a good fyne

¶ Uertue conſerueth all men in their glory
And here confirmeth their habitations
Where vyces putteth their price out of memory
For their treſpaſes/ and alſo tranſgreſſyons
Than are they taken and caſt in priſons
Some after/ for their great punicyon
Brought to their ende/ by iuſt executyon

¶ Lokinge about them/ there ſhall they ſe
Their frendes/ and other for dolour ſobbynge
With their handes wrangyng thy fore aduerſyte
Some wondering/ ſome be dewed wt wepyng
Of ſtrangers a noyce/ and a hidyouſe cryenge
Thus is their ende/ with ſhamfull rumure
Where vertue lacketh/ nothing maye endure

¶ Loke/ who in this worlde doth moſt deſyre
By wronge tytle/ his ſtate to magnify
By an etyke of couetouſe/ hotter than fyre
Other mennes goodes/ as his owne to occupy
As I haue red/ and ſene with myne eye
Though it hath laſted for a ſmall tyme
The ende of it hath turned to ruyne

¶ Marke in your mynde/ who euer hath vſed
To oppreſſe trewth: by power and tyranny
And right wyſeneſſe/ by wyll hath refuſed
Supportynge him ſelfe/ by extortion & robbery
Auoydyng reaſon/ folowinge ſenſualyte
Conſecter euer/ if their fyne and preſe
Were nat alwaye/ to dye at a miſchefe

To

¶ To this I knowe/ no man can make defcorde
For well it is proued/all fuch wyll come to nought
Thoufandes of exãples I coulde bring to recorde
And mo I knowe/ if they were out fought
It fhall nat nede/ for all men in their thought
Knoweth ill gotten/ worfe euer fpent
yet for their extortion/ they fhall be fhent

¶ Befydes that/ fuch as loueth idelneffe
Owinge to god/neither loue nor drede
Couetoufe people/that men doth oppreffe
And fuch as wyll do nothinge / but for mede
As defemblers cladde in double wede
Who fercheth well/ nought is the ende
yet god fuffreth longe/ to haue them to amende

¶ From yll counfayle/ faft loke thou flee
For that hath brought many to mifchaunce
Shedynge honey firft / ftingyng after as the be
Though ỹ honey be fwete / ỹ ftinge is greuãce
So fhall be the ende/ who foloweth the chaunce
That he fhall curfe the tyme/ and alfo repent
That euer with their hony / he toke any talent

¶ Suche maye be called / the deuyls taberers
With froward foundes/ the eares to fulfyll
Or of Cures the perilous buttelers
Which gall with their honney/ downe diftyll
Whofe drinkes be both amorous and yll
And all clerkes well deuyfe conne
Worfe than the drinke of Cerenes tonne

¶ Therfore put lyfe neuer in a venture
But for matters iust/ and also trewe
Preue them by reason that they stande sure
Knowe well the grownde/ of mater olde or newe
The best than take/ and the worst eschew
After thy degre/ make thy cost and spendynge
That in a meane/ thou make a good endynge

¶ Whan Dedalus taught his sonne for to flye
He bad him first of hye discretyon
From Phebus hete / to kepe his wynges fre
And from Neptunus colde congelacion
Meanyng hereby/ for shorte conclusyou
That who that lyst with ioye his state assure
In a good meane men shulde lengest endure

¶ With great plenty/ men be nat best assured
After their lust alway to lyue in ease
And though ẏ men great treasure hath recured
With their riches they fele many a disease
Gret ꝑsonag; hath nat alwai thing; thē to please
Therfore as stories dyuers doth expresse
Hartely is ioye/ atwene pouertie and richese

¶ In the erth here/ the greatest felicite
For the hertes ease/ and richest possessyon
Is with suffysaunce content for to be
Of worldly trouble to eschew the occasyon
Meuyng no quarelles/ ẏ shulde cause discension
Nor desyre nothinge/ harde to recure
For here is lyttell in this worlde sure.

Morall

¶ Morall Seneck/ recordeth by writynge
Richest of thinges/is a meane from pouerte
Euer of one chere/ voyde of all grudgynge
Both in ioye/ and also aduersyte
Thorowe this worlde to haue their lyberte
And these Greke wordes which I written fynde
Alwayes remembre and bere them in thy mynde

¶ Diogynes was content in his lytell tunne
His conquest was more souerayne of degre
Than Alexander/for al his renowme
For he conquered his sensualyte
Makinge him subiecte to reason of dewtie
And clerke of his kechen he made attemperaunce
Which of his body had the hole gouernaunce

¶ Examples we haue ynough vs to suffyce
In bokes founde. xx. thousande and mo
To exemplyfy folke that ben wyse
How this worlde is a thorow fare full of wo
Tossed and tumbled with vanytes to and fro
Deth is annexed to vs by successyon
For Adams offence to vs conueyde downe

¶ O worldely folke aduertyce with good entent
What vengeaunce/ and what punissyon
God shall take in his iugement
For our trespaces/and also transgressyon
Which breketh his preceptes against all reason
Forgettynge howe with his precious blode
Vs to saue/ he dyed on the rode.

Here

¶ Here for oure sakes/ and oure redemption
Thorowe hande and fote nayled to a tre
Soffred payne/ and cruell passyon
Nothinge asking of high nor lowe degre
Recompensed ayenwarde for to be
But that we shulde set/ all hole our ententes
To fulfyll all his commaundementes.

¶ Thus endeth the Dialogue of
the Playntyf and the
defendaunte.

Prynted at London by Thomas
Godfray.

Cum priuilegio Regali.